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ABSTRACT

Based on a survey sponsored by COMPress Quarterly of various schools to determine the extent of the problem of lack of funds for purchasing computer software and how schools have coped with the problem, this booklet describes numerous ways to raise funds for software purchases. Nearly 1,000 questionnaires were returned and this booklet was developed from the responses. It is divided into five major areas: (1) "Unabashed Solicitations" presents information on donations, contributions, and company-sponsored software; (2) "Sponsor User-Friendly Fairs & Festivities" includes information on computer fests, bus trips, pancake breakfasts, beauty contests, athletic events, and a computer dating service; (3) "Sell Computer-Related Goods & Services" includes information on selling computer-produced merchandise, souvenirs and blank disks, teaching computer classes, sponsoring a computer camp, recruiting a business professional, renting computer time, providing word processing services, and developing databases; (4) "Offering Mega Services" includes car washes, sporting goods exchange, collecting returnable cans/bottles, selling souvenirs/school equipment/seasonal products, wrapping Christmas gifts and "Rent-a-Claus"; and (5) "Run A Raffle, Auction, or Something-A-Thon" includes selling raffle tickets, hosting an auction, and planning other fundraising events. (DJR)

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35 Ways to Take a "Byte" out of Software Costs.

FUND RAISING IDEAS from COMPress Customers.

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INTRODUCTION

Many educators have told us that they would like to use our quality software in their classrooms, but they don't have the funds available to purchase it. The lack of funds so frequently prevents schools from buying the software they want. How can they get the necessary funds other than through traditional budget channels?

To address that question, the COMPress Quarterly conducted a survey to determine how common the funding problem was, and to see how various schools have raised funds for software purchases.

The response we received was overwhelming — nearly a thousand questionnaires were returned, and from them we've distilled the ideas and information down into five major areas: Unabashed Solicitations, User-Friendly Fairs and Festivities, Computer-Related Goods and Services, Mega-Services, and Raffles, Auctions, and Something-A-Thons. We found that not only are PTA's, PTO's and PSO's involved, but frequently the Science Club, Computer Club, Student Council or other student governmental organizations were the movers and shakers behind getting things done. Who gets the ball rolling is not so important as simply getting it rolling.

Congratulations to Dr. A.J. Surkon of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, who received $100 credit toward the purchase of any COMPress software. His name was drawn from among all those who returned the fund raising questionnaire.

We thank all of you who participated, and we're pleased to share your ideas with your peers. Of course, you can use these ideas to raise funds for hardware, peripherals, and even (perish the thought) our competitors' software.

But because we want to help you make your software purchasing goals a reality, we're offering any school or school-related organization a one-time 20% discount on any and all purchases of COMPress software made as the result of a fund-raising effort. Details, and a special certificate are included in this booklet.

Here Are Some Slogans to Get Rolling

Whether enticing people to contribute cash, products, services, or time, keep your campaign organized, upbeat, and above all well publicized with posters and banners. The following are some suggestions for fundraising slogans:

— Chip In for Computer Software

— Provide Profits for Purchasing Peripherals

— We need your input to help ours. Contribute to our computer software fund drive.

— We are discontent. We need more disks to be content. (Or, we want to be disk-content.)

— Every Byte Helps. Support our software fund drive.

— Support our disk drive.

Best of Luck!

SPONSOR USER-FRIENDLY FAIRS AND FESTIVITIES

The possibilities here are vast! Key to a hefty profit requires good ideas, good organization, and good advance publicity. Bear in mind annual events usually earn greater profits with each year as more publicity is generated, regulars return, and newcomers discover them. They also become easier to implement with experience.

Run a Computer Fest

Organize a mini-trade show with local personal computer companies setting up displays with computers, printers, software accessories for hands-on use.

Adding other profit making opportunities can make the fest more informative, more fun and more lucrative. For example:

— Demonstrate games and educational software for kids of all ages.

— Charge 25¢ a turn for computer games for kids.

— Sell souvenirs.

— Sell snack food or light fare such as hot dogs or pizza.

— Sell baked goods or seasonal products.

Note: Check through other categories for additional ideas to include in the fest.

Organize a School-Sponsored Bus Trip

Plan a one-day bus trip to an area of interest. Charge enough to cover the bus trip, admission to the event or area, and a profit for your computer fund. Possibilities include:

— riverboat excursion
— harbor cruise
— ocean liner tour
— architectural tour
— theater and backstage tour
— historic area such as Williamsburg, Virginia, or Plymouth (Mass.) Plantation
— recreational areas such as beaches, or hiking or skiing areas

Hold a Pancake Breakfast: Floppy Pancakes for Floppy Disks

Sponsor a pancake breakfast on a Saturday morning, preferably before a crowd-attracting sporting or cultural event scheduled by the school.

Pizza or local fare (clambake, tacos) are possibilities for dinner before an evening event. Breakfasts, however, usually involve less expense and generate greater turn-outs — and more $ in your till.

Stage a Beauty Contest

Adding a new twist to a traditional event, make it a men's beauty contest. (Judge the beautiful bauds.) Recruit people from local companies and organizations (police, fire, Masons, Kiwanis, veterans groups, your school, city or town officials) to sponsor one of their employees in a beauty contest.

Sponsors pay an entry fee for their candidate, and tickets are sold in advance or at the door. Selected teachers or students judge the pageant while more musical students provide background music.

This event could provide a hilarious evening for spectators and participants, and could be easily coupled with a food event, auction, or raffle drawing.

Sponsor Student-Faculty Athletic Event

A little competition between students and faculty/administration in volleyball, basketball, or baseball, for example, can provide fun and earn money. Consider combining this event with a concession stand, concurrent bake sale or raffle drawing.

Organize a Race for Kids

Instead of the customary 10 kilometer road race, try a 2 kilometer (approximately 1¼ mile) race and encourage young runners to enter — for a fee, of course! Sell food, drinks, ballons, T-shirts, souvenirs for even more profit.

Operate a Computer Dating Service

This service — for ambitious and perhaps brave groups — can be a good money maker if carefully developed and implemented. One school took a more conservative approach where interested students, for a fee, filled out a form listing their interests only. They were matched with a partner of the opposite sex for a particular dance at one of the school dances.

SELL COMPUTER-RELATED GOODS AND SERVICES

To rub elbows with likely donors to the computer fundraising cause, utilize school functions such as open houses and school athletic or cultural events whenever possible. Check with appropriate local and school officials for setting up an area on a Saturday at a shopping mall, the town dump, Little League field,or other high traffic area.

Sell Computer-Produced Merchandise

Utilizing software packages on the market (such as Print Shop) can help students produce a versatile range of attractive, contemporary, personalized paper products. Examples include:

- posters or banners for special events: "Posters for a Pittance," "Banners for a Buck"
- all-occasion, personalized greeting cards
- certificates or awards such as: "World's Greatest Second Cousin"
- note pads
- calendars: a school calendar with dates of holidays and vacations, when grades or report cards are sent out; PTA or School Committee meetings, athletic events, other scheduled extra-curricular events

Sell Software-Fundraising Souvenirs

Personalize inexpensive souvenirs with a slogan from your software fundraising campaign. Examples include buttons, helium balloons (especially at outdoor events with children), bumper stickers, frisbees, painter's caps, visors. To eliminate any expense, try to obtain a sponsor to purchase them.

Sell Blank Disks

Purchase blank disks wholesale and sell to students, teachers, and the community at a small profit.

Teach Computer Classes to the Community

Some computer classrooms are only used during school hours. Computer students can utilize evening or weekend time by either teaching, assisting teachers, or organizing classes or workshops for interested members of the community. Adults could be charged a set fee or could be asked for a donation. Possible topics include:

- getting acquainted with the computer
- how to choose a computer

— how to choose software for your needs
— spreadsheet analysis
— home accounting
— data base management
— word processing

Sponsor Computer Camp for Kids

Vacation weeks can be an ideal time for computer students to hold a computer camp for younger students, or assist teachers in doing so. Curriculum could include introduction to the computer, games, interesting educational software, and, if appropriate, programming. A portion of the fee would be for computer software.

Teach an In-House Class at Local Business

Another teaching option is for qualified computer students to teach an in-house computer class at a local business. The business would buy the software for the class and donate it to the high-school or college afterward.

Recruit a Business Professional to Teach a Specialty

Find a business professional or teacher who is willing to conduct classes or workshops whereby a percentage of the class fees would be donated to the computer club.

Rent Computer Time

For people who have the expertise but not the equipment, allow them to use school computers for a fee at designated hours.

Provide Word-Processing Services

Computer students charge a fee for word-processing services for classmates with research papers, teachers, or members of the community.

Develop Databases

Along the same line as the above, computer students develop programs or databases for others for a fee. Possibilities include Christmas card labels, individualized family calendars with birthdays, anniversaries, important dates and reminders such as taxes due, time to schedule semi-annual dentist appointment.

OFFER MEGA-SERVICES

To support your software fund drive, try offering some of the following services to the community.

Hold the Ultimate Car Wash

The following variations to a traditional parking lot car wash can help earn a greater profit.

Offer deluxe services. If you have access to a heavy duty or industrial vacuum (and electrical outlet), offer to clean the inside of the car for an additional fee. Include inside window washing, dashboard cleaning, whitewall scrubbing.

Sell tickets for the car wash in advance so people who may not go to the car wash will still have the opportunity to contribute to the cause. Of course, sell on location that day as well. For an added extra, have the ticket function as a raffle ticket and award a prize.

Plan a car wash at school especially for teachers and other school employees.

Sponsor Used Sporting Goods Exchange

Students, parents, people in the community bring in their children's outgrown sporting equipment such as skates, cleats, skis, hockey and football equipment, perhaps even unused golf clubs, bar bells, rowing machines.

Merchandise is assessed, labeled, priced, and displayed on designated sale day. Original owner and computer club share the profit on each item.

This event requires careful organization and a substantial investment of time, but it's a potentially substantial money maker and a service many families appreciate.

Collect Returnable Bottles, Aluminum Cans

Publicize your drive for returnable bottles and cans so people can save them for a few weeks until the designated collection day. Provide a pick-up service at various locations so students won't have to lug them on a bus to school.

Sell School Souvenirs

School tee-shirts or sweatshirts with the name of your school imprinted can be a unique and popular item to sell for profit. (Most colleges already have them.)

Take orders in advance so that you can be assured of covering expenses and realizing a profit. See if a local graphics or silkscreen company will donate their services or offer a discount.

Sell Old School Equipment

Make a few phone calls to the local schools to see if there are old desks, chairs, cafeteria tables, lab equipment, sundry treasures gathering cobwebs in cluttered store rooms. Goods could be sold yard-sale fashion. Consider holding this sale in combination with other events, or as part of an auction.

Sell Seasonal Products

Examples of seasonal products, purchased wholesale, include:

- Halloween candy in the fall
- fruitcakes, baked goods, wreaths for the Thanksgiving/ Christmas season
- annuals and perennials (possibly grown at (school) in the spring

Wrap Christmas Gifts

For a week or two before Christmas, late afternoon through early evening hours, set up a strategic area at a local shopping mall and provide a Chistmas present wrapping service. See if local merchants will donate or offer a discount for supplies. Bows or decorations can be made ahead of time. Be sure to have a sign saying the proceeds will help purchase needed software for the local high school or college.

Rent-a-Claus

Students can borrow a Santa Claus costume and rent themselves out for Christmas parties.

RUN A RAFFLE, AUCTION, OR SOMETHING-A-THON

Sell Raffle Tickets

With a nifty prize, an enthusiastic team of ticket sellers, and a minimum of expenses, a raffle can be an automatic money maker. A few suggestions before you proceed:

- Obtain approval, from state, local, and school authorities.
- Give considerable thought to a grand prize that people will be enthusiastic about.
- Decide on either one grand prize or several additional prizes as well.
- Try to get a business or local merchant to donate the prize so profits don't have to be spent underwriting its cost.
- To determine the cost of a raffle ticket, consider the value of the prize, the number of people you expect to purchase tickets, what you expect they will pay, and how much you want to profit. You may be more likely to sell 200 tickets at $1 than 100 at $2?

A few prize ideas:

- cash (always popular)
- electronic appliances: computer, TV, VCR, stereo
- sporting equipment: bicycle, tennis racquet
- hard-to-obtain or expensive tickets: to a musical, sporting, or arts event
- a trip (ideally donated by a local travel agent)
- limousine service on prom night
- dinner for 2 (or more) at an elegant restaurant
- complete Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner
- a quilt (perhaps with the help of the Home Ec. Department or local volunteer seamstresses)

Host an Auction

Recruit local celebrities, such as popular teachers or school administrators, chief of police or fire department, mayor, local musician, disc jockey, or colorful personality to take shifts auctioning.

The following examples of services donated by students, teachers and friends may provide an added dimension:

- computer lessons
- lessons of any kind (cooking, swimming, golfing, tennis, karate)
- ethnic dinner for a certain number of people
- hors d'oeuvres for 20
- hand made doll clothes or doll house
- snow shoveling
- lawn mowing
- babysitting
- clean up service after party
- party helpers (bartenders, if old enough)
- haircuts, French braids, manicures
- car tune up

People affiliated with the school who have a large boat, swimming pool, tennis court, horses, might agree to donate the use of their facility to a family or group for an afternoon or evening.

Plan a Something-A-Thon

A-thons can be very popular fundraising events. The activity should be carefully selected to generate a good turn-out and a lot of enthusiasm. Popular a-thons for students include walking, running, biking, and dancing.

In a whatever-a-thon, participants register for the event and find as many people as possible to sponsor them for however many cents (or dollars) a mile, or a pound, etc. that they want. After the event, participants collect the money from the sponsors.

One New Jersey baseball team runs an annual Litter-A-Thon. Players pick up pounds of litter in return for pounds-per-pledge from neighborhood people. The event cleans up the area and earns them a sizable amount of money.

A group in another town sponsored a Read-A-Thon to raise money for their library. Sponsors pledged an amount for each book participants read in a given month.

ENCOURAGE UNABASHED SOLICITATION

Chip in for Computer Software

Some of us are hesitant to ask for money outright. But bear in mind that one distinct advantage of a cash donation is that it involves money only, not the donor's time. Many people and organizations are more than willing to support a worthy cause without attending an event or purchasing goods.

Look Under Your Own Roof for Donations

Seek people likely to be supportive such as alumni, relatives, friends, local businesses. Many are often willing to chip into a credible cause. Don't forget that students have money too. One resourceful high school raised a goodly profit with the fundraising idea that follows.

Hold School Competition for Contributions

Students from each of the four classes reached into their pockets and purses and lined up all their nickels and dimes across the gym floor. The class with the longest line received glory and a prize, and the computer club received all the money.

Write for Donations

A straightforward letter can do wonders. Pick your audience carefully and clearly state the cause, the credibility of the cause, and the suggested donation. This approach has evoked a very generous response in the past.

Encourage Product Donations

Rather than donating cash, some people or companies may prefer to donate a product or service their company provides. Such products can make terrific raffle prizes.

Suggest Company-Sponsored Software

Request that a company provide funds for software related to its field. For example, one utility company enthusiastically financed the purchase of energy conservation software for a local school.

Hints for Soliciting Donations

— Soliciting in person is best, but by mail and telephone can be profitable too. Remember you're not only selling the cause — software support — but yourself as well.

— Aim high. Obtaining large donations are often as easy as obtaining small ones. Try to start with a pace-setting person or company. People usually give in proportion to others on the list.

— Ask about donor's publicity preference. Some businesses appreciate being in the limelight for donating to a cause; others are averse to it for fear of being bombarded by umpteen other requests.

— Acknowledge with thanks via a letter, if feasible, and explain how the money is being used.

— Keep good records. The best source of donations is from those who have given before, so be conscientious about acknowledgements and good record keeping for a ready source for the next year's fundraiser.

We'll help you take a byte out of software costs!!

The coupon on this page entitles any school or school-related organization to a one-time 20% discount toward the purchase of COMPress software. To qualify for the discount, you must submit your order on an authorized purchase order, or organization letterhead, or with payment. (We pay postage charges on prepaid orders.) Complete the information on the coupon and attach it to your order, or payment. That's all there is to it.

COMPress 20% software discount coupon.

This coupon is good for a 20% discount on COMPress software. To receive your discount, please complete the information below and attach this coupon to your order or include it with your prepayment. You must use this coupon. No facsimile or substitute is valid. Coupon offer is valid until June 30, 1986.

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